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Remarks

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

Prepared for delivery by Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block at the unveiling of the 1983 Yearbook, Washington, D.C., Dec. 8.

I understand that a number of USDA field employees are on the telephone with us today, along with farmers, members of the media and others who are interested in conservation. And I see a group of interested people here with us at the USDA. Let me say to all of you, I appreciate your joining us.

Much of what I have to say will be addressed to our employees out in the field, and I'm glad to have this chance to talk to so many at once.

This news conference being carried to so many people across the country by telephone is a first! Technology seems to be closing the distance between us more and more every year.

- But setting aside the technology, there's another factor which will also make this day a first. By working together, you and I can make December 8, 1983, a day when a renewed commitment was made—by all of us—toward resource conservation in the United States.

Conservation has always been a top priority for me personally, and in the operation of my farm in Illinois. It was a top priority while I was director of agriculture in Illinois, and I made it one of USDA's top priorities when I came to Washington nearly three years ago.

I'm proud of the accomplishments we have seen already. I believe it is appropriate to mention just a few of them. For example, we completed our preferred program for the Resource Conservation Act and in December 1982 forwarded the resulting National Conservation Program to Congress, along with the first Presidential policy statement on soil and water conservation.

We have targeted some of our technical and financial assistance toward critical erosion-prone and water-short areas. The results have been good. I'll talk more about that later.

We also helped the conservation tillage technique move past the 100 million acre mark. Now it is practiced on one of every four cropland acres in the U.S.

I was also pleased that funding has been approved just recently for construction of the USDA National Soil Tilth Center at Ames, Iowa. This center will serve as a major focal point for research designed to insure the capability to produce from the land without depleting our valuable natural resources.

Our payment-in-kind (PIK) program also has to be counted as a major accomplishment in our attempts to save the vital soils. Our assessment shows an average soil loss reduction of 1.6 tons per acre on land removed from production. That means over 120 million tons of soil were saved.

USDA employees, in some way or another, joined the farmers in making these programs happen. We worked together! And because of our efforts, every citizen of this nation will benefit.

1983 Yearbook

It is appropriate that "Using Our Natural Resources" is the theme of the 1983 Yearbook of Agriculture, which we are introducing today. We have a remarkable story to tell of our nation's natural resources. The yearbook is packed with interesting information about our soil, water, forests and woodlands, wilderness, wildlife, outdoor recreation and urban-suburban greenbelts.

The yearbook outlines changes that have taken place in our care for those resources. It describes where we are today. It suggests what the future may bring. And it should be an excellent textbook as well as an important information tool for farmers, ranchers and millions of other citizens.

Throughout the yearbook, the emphasis is on conservation and wise use of those varied national treasures that we call natural resources.

I believe it is fitting to launch the yearbook on the same day I launch a special national campaign aimed at resource conservation. It's a campaign which is going to involve all USDA employees. Advancing resource conservation involves all of us, not just those directly involved in conservation.

To USDA employees in the field, close to the people we serve, I compliment you for doing a fine job. We should all be proud of our efforts to date. But now we must look to the future, and there is much yet to be done.

There are opportunities we haven't taken . . . concerns we haven't met . . . research we haven't done . . . and cooperation we have not yet tried. In short, there is still a new and firmer commitment to make. I'm asking you to make it with me today.

Today I am going to announce a series of new initiatives. I want you to view them from a broad perspective. I want you to influence each other in the spirit of cooperation. I want you to be even more open to suggestions for improving each other's programs so that our efforts are even more compatible and more complementary.

Acreage Conservation Reserve

It is a fair criticism that the farm commodity and credit programs put in place by Congress and administered by USDA are sometimes at cross purposes with desirable soil and water conservation objectives. The initiatives I am announcing are intended to help close that gap.

First, I am making \$20 million of Agricultural Conservation Program funds available in 1984 for highly erodible land which is placed into the acreage conservation reserve.

Production, of course, is the business of agriculture. That's where everything in the food and fiber chain begins. But production is good only as long as it takes place on suitable land. It's in the farmer's interest to use his land wisely. It is also in the national interest that America's farmers not plant fence row to fence row—not if it means they will be producing on highly erodible land.

The 1984 farm programs will offer us an opportunity to protect this land. Under this action, some farmers who divert cropland acreage into the 1984 acreage conservation reserve will be eligible for additional assistance in retiring some of these acres—the ones that are most erodible—for either five or ten years by planting grass or trees.

And here's an important point for farmers to know: The land treated under this reserve will be eligible for inclusion in the base calculation for any acreage reduction plans through 1985.

Farmers in the acreage conservation reserve who additionally elect to put their highly erodible cropland into grass or trees will receive 90 percent cost-sharing from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service for the cost of planting grass or trees on those acres. They can also get technical assistance from the Soil Conservation

Service on seeding grass, and from state extension foresters on planting trees.

Extension services will provide information and education leadership on the benefits of program participation and cropland conversion.

This coordinated approach will help determine the effectiveness of combining a useful short-term commodity program objective with a long-term conservation objective. It will also give USDA and the Congress a chance to evaluate the willingness of farmers and other landowners to make a long-term commitment to retire highly erodible cropland.

This is important—important enough that I will repeat it. The reserve plan will give USDA and the Congress a chance to evaluate the willingness of farmers and other landowners to make a long-term commitment.

What this means is that I expect a conservation effort to be a very strong part of the future of agriculture, both in government and in the private sector. The subject must be addressed in the 1985 farm bill. For example, we must seriously question the extent to which farm commodity and credit programs sometimes encourage row-crop production on highly erodible lands.

Pilot Program

Another area which will be watched closely by USDA and the Congress is a pilot program I am announcing today for the Palouse Region in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. Stated simply, ASCS is changing its regulations for those states to encourage some acreage that is in perennial grasses and legumes to remain in this soil-conserving condition, instead of being torn up.

Normally, this acreage could not be counted as acreage conservation reserve because it has not been in grain production in two of the past three years. But we have found that this requirement encourages farmers to tear up the cover crop on erodible soil ahead of schedule in order to prove a crop history.

The pilot program will allow some producers to leave the grass or legume on the land and prevent soil erosion. We will count these acres as acreage conservation reserve under any 1984 acreage diversion for wheat.

Expansion of Targeting

I mentioned earlier, targeting more USDA assistance to areas of greatest need has been remarkably successful in saving soil and water. Let me be a little more specific.

In 1983 alone, targeting resulted in 29 million additional tons of soil saved and conservation of 276,000 more acre-feet of water. With a record like that, I can see only one direction to go. That is why we have decided to expand targeting in 1984 to critical areas in 45 states. This is a cornerstone of the National Conservation Program.

Resource Conservation Conferences

I am also announcing plans for two important conferences in 1984. One will be a roundtable discussion next spring at the farm of Peter Myers, chief of the Soil Conservation Service. Various conservation and farm organizations will be invited. We will discuss conservation strategy for the 1985 farm bill.

The second will be a national conference on conservation tillage technology on October 3-5 in Nashville, Tennessee. It will be co-sponsored by several national groups.

In both sessions, we will seek workable suggestions for improving future program performance, landowner participation, and conservation accomplishments. We expect to receive some valuable suggestions and advice during the meetings.

USDA Field Campaign for Conservation

Finally, in launching these initiatives, it is fitting that I again call on all USDA agencies—all the people in our department from coast to coast—to work together in 1984 to advance resource conservation. Conservation is our business, and I mean all of us.

We need to inform and educate many more people on what and where the resource problems are, and how they can be addressed.

We need to enlist more volunteers and other private sector involvement in resource improvement.

USDA cannot and should not do the whole job itself, especially in a time of heavy federal deficits. A number of states have introduced ambitious new conservation programs in the past few years, at a time when their own budgets have been constrained.

We need to strengthen this partnership of federal, state, and local agencies. We need to draw in professional organizations, universities and the private sector. This is another cornerstone of the National Conservation Program.

In this administration, we have organized the USDA agency leaders in every state and county into Food and Agriculture Councils, called FACs. They are responsible for activities that require the coordination of USDA agencies. And today I call upon these FAC's to plan and carry out a special effort to advance resource conservation in 1984.

To every state and local FAC member in the U.S., I urge you to make resource conservation your business for 1984, along with—and as part of—the other missions you carry out very well.

I ask the state and local FACs to carry out resource conservation campaigns and projects across agency lines that meet specific conservation needs. Work with state and local officials, farm and conservation groups, and the private sector. Show them that conservation is our business. Find a better way to help!

For members of the state FAC and the local FAC that are able to show distinguished achievements of major significance in this conservation campaign by next fall, I will reserve the highest honor that I as Secretary can bestow on our employees—the distinguished service award.

And since farmers and ranchers are the hands-on stewards of natural resources, it is likewise important that they receive some recognition. The National Endowment for Soil and Water Conservation has an outstanding awards program. One of its 10 finalists is here today—Jim Martin of Indiana—who is the subject of one of the yearbook chapters.

Many other private awards programs exist. So let's help those groups find and reward the best conservationists of this nation.

Over the past few years, there has been a quiet revolution in the way that farmers and ranchers—the Jim Martins of America—use and care for their natural resources. USDA has been a part of this revolution, and USDA will be helping farmers and ranchers increase

their stewardship of our natural resources while building a strong farm economy.

True, we are fighting a formidable opponent. Erosion eats away at our basic resources . . . saps our strength . . . cuts our yields . . . increases our costs . . . and retards our future. But an even more formidable opponent could be apathy itself. We can't let that happen!

With the aid of all of you, our leaders in Congress, and private citizens themselves—we can get the job done!

And we will do it!

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News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Governmental and Public Affairs

USDA ANNOUNCES 1983 GRADE LOAN RATES FOR VIRGINIA FIRE AND SUN CURED TOBACCOS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today issued grade loan rates for Virginia fire-cured, type 21 and Virginia sun-cured, type 37 tobacco.

According to Everett Rank, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, the schedule for Virginia fire-cured tobacco is based on the average support level of \$1.188 per pound, the same as the 1982 price support level. He said the grade loan rates will range from 61 cents to \$1.91 per pound. Tobacco graded NIL, NID, NIGL, N2 (substantial nondescript), W (doubtful keeping order), No-G (no grade), U (unsound), or scrap will not be accepted, Rank said.

Grades X5L, X5F, X5D, X5M, X5M-45, X5G and X5G-45 will be supported 10 cents lower than the stated rate if marketed in untied form. No other grades will be supported in untied form, he said.

The schedule for Virginia sun-cured tobacco is based on the average level of support of \$1.094 per pound, the same as the 1982 price support level. Grade loan rates will range from 80 cents to \$1.84 per pound.

Tobacco graded N1L, N2L, N1R, N2R, N1G, N2G, "U" (unsound), "N0-G" (no grade), "W" (doubtful keeping order), or scrap will not be accepted for price support.

Rank said only the original producer is eligible for price support under the program, and as a further condition of price support eligibility producers of both kinds of tobacco must contribute two cents per pound of tobacco marketed to a No Net Cost Tobacco Account. These accounts are established by associations in accordance with provisions of the No Net Cost Tobacco Program Act of 1982.

Further, he said the tobacco association may deduct four cents per pound from support rates paid to producers to help cover overhead costs.

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USDA ANNOUNCES GRADE LOAN RATES FOR CONNECTICUT VALLEY TOBACCO

WASHINGTON, Dec. 5—Schedules of grade loan rates for 1983 crop Connecticut Valley Broadleaf (type 51) and Havana Seed (type 52) tobacco were announced today by Everett Rank, administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

He said rates for these kinds of tobaccos are based on an average price support level of \$1.212 per pound, the same level as 1982 as required by the recent amendment to the Agricultural Act of 1949.

As a condition of price support eligibility, producers of Connecticut Valley Broadleaf and Havana Seed tobacco need to contribute 3 cents per pound for tobacco marketed to a No Net Cost Tobacco Account. These accounts are established by associations in accordance with provisions of the No Net Cost Tobacco Program Act of 1982. Also, the cooperative association through which advances are made is authorized to deduct an additional \$3 per hundred pounds to apply against overhead costs.

Only the original producer is eligible to receive advances. No advance is authorized for tobacco graded "N1" (first quality nondescript), "N2" (second quality nondescript) or "S" (scrap), or designated "No-G" (no grade).

A table of rates, by types and grades, follows:

1983 Crop - Price Support Schedule
Connecticut Valley Broadleaf Tobacco, Type 51 and
Connecticut Valley Havana Seed Tobacco, Type 52

Grade	Type 51 Advance Rate	Type 52 Advance Rate
<i>(Dollars per Hundred Pounds Farm Sales Weight)</i>		
B1	163	158
B2	150	147
B3	132	129
B4	107	105
B5	80	80
X1	50	50

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**USDA MEXICAN FRUIT FLY REGULATIONS IMPOSED
IN LOS ANGELES**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 5—Parts of Los Angeles County, Calif., will go under federal Mexican fruit fly regulations Dec. 6 to prevent spread of this destructive pest, U.S. Department of Agriculture officials announced today.

"The Mexican fruit fly could cost millions of dollars in fruit damage and lost exports if it were allowed to spread in California," said Bert Hawkins, administrator of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. "The regulations will help prevent spread while we work with state and county officials to get rid of the infestation."

The newly regulated area in Los Angeles County contains about 44 square miles, centered in Huntington Park, a residential and industrial area. Since the first Mexican fruit flies were found near Huntington Park on Oct. 25, 167 flies have been trapped and fruit on several properties has been found infested with larvae.

Hawkins said steps taken to eliminate the infestation include stepped-up trapping and a weekly aerial treatment with a pesticide bait spray.

"This pest could be as destructive as the Mediterranean fruit fly, which invaded California a couple of years ago," he said. "We are determined to keep it confined and eradicate it."

The regulations prohibit movement of certain articles that could artificially spread the pest from the regulated area to other U.S. citrus-growing areas unless they are certified as free of the Mexican fruit fly. The federal regulations govern interstate movement, and they parallel state regulations governing intrastate movement.

U.S. citrus-growing areas include Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Texas, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Louisiana parishes of Iberia, Jefferson, Lafayette, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Mary and Terrebonne.

Regulated articles include apple, apricot, avocado, grapefruit, guave, plum, certain lemons and limes, mango, peach, pear, plum and some other fruits.

Rose apple, pomegranate, Spanish plum, purple mombin and nectarine have been added to the list of regulated articles in existing regulations, which included the other fruits and which have applied to the lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas since 1972.

In southern Texas, where Mexican fruit fly infestations appear annually, these added fruits do not grow. Soil within the drip line of plants producing, or which have produced, fruit has also been added to the regulations, because of California plant marketing practices, which are different from those in Texas.

Written comments may be sent, until Feb. 6, to Thomas O. Gessel, Director, Regulatory Coordination Staff, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 6505 Belcrest Road, Rm. 728, Federal Building, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

The regulations go into effect upon publication in the Dec. 6 Federal Register.

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NEW LAW FREEZES TOBACCO SUPPORT PRICES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 6—The Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983, signed into law by President Reagan Nov. 29, continues a freeze on the support price of flue-cured tobacco and ties the support prices of other kinds of tobacco to the flue-cured level, an official of the U.S. Department of Agriculture said today.

Everett Rank, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said that the new law establishes the 1984 support level for flue-cured tobacco at \$1.699 a pound, a level unchanged since 1982. The 1983 law specifies the support levels for 1984 crops of tobacco, other than flue-cured, shall be at a level that does not narrow the price support differential between flue-cured and other such types of tobacco.

For all types of tobacco except burley, this means that support levels may not increase between 1983 and 1984, said Rank. Before price support levels are set, USDA is required to solicit comments from the public and consider certain economic factors for each kind of tobacco.

In subsequent years, tobacco support levels will be based on statutory formulas prescribed by the Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended.

According to Rank, these statutory formulas affect tobacco support prices in the following ways:

- For flue-cured tobacco, the support level will remain frozen for 1985, if the increase in support as determined by the statutory formula is 5 percent or less. If the statutory increase exceeds 5 percent, the 1985 support will be determined by adding the increase to the 1984 support level.

- For burley tobacco in 1985, and for all price supported tobaccos in 1986 and future years, the statutory increase will be added to the previous year's level of support.

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OATS IN FARMER-OWNED GRAIN RESERVE RELEASED

WASHINGTON, Dec. 7—Oats in the farmer-owned grain reserve was released for redemption, effective immediately, by Everett Rank, executive vice president of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation.

Rank said this means farmers now may sell—but are not required to sell—their reserve oats after repaying their CCC price support loan.

The reason for today's action, he said, was that the national average price received by farmers for oats had reached \$1.65 per bushel, the same as the commodity's \$1.65 per bushel reserve release level.

USDA makes storage payments to farmers with grain in the reserve. Upon repayment of the loan, farmers can keep the storage payments earned through the date of repayment.

Release of reserve oats will continue through Jan. 31, Rank said. If the five-day national average market price remains at or above \$1.65 on Feb. 1, storage earnings will stop and interest on the price support loan will begin to accrue for oats that has been in reserve for more than one year. Interest already is accruing on loans for oats that has been in reserve less than one year.

If the Feb. 1 price falls below \$1.65, reserve oats no longer will be in release status and farmers will continue earning storage payments.

Data used by CCC in determining the release level include five-day moving average prices—as reported by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service—which show prices bid by buyers at selected markets, and month-end report of prices received by farmers issued by USDA's Statistical Reporting Service. This report shows the previous month's average price and the current mid-month price.

The daily market reviewed by CCC for oats is Minneapolis.

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SECRETARY BLOCK OUTLINES NEW CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today announced new initiatives by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to encourage more farmers and ranchers to reduce soil erosion and improve natural resources.

Block combined the announcement with his introduction of the 1983 Yearbook of Agriculture, "Using our Natural Resources."

Block said he is making \$20 million of Agricultural Conservation Program funds available for long-term conservation on highly erodible land in the 1984 acreage conservation reserve. To be eligible for consideration, farmers must be enrolled in a 1984 commodity program requiring an acreage reduction. The funds will be used to encourage the planting of grass or trees rather than crops on highly erodible land. The government's cost-share rate will be 90 percent.

"Our goal for this test program is to determine a producers' willingness to retire highly erodible land for five years if seeded to grass—and at least 10 years if planted to trees," Block said. "They can also be assured that acreage under the plan will be eligible for any acreage reduction plan through 1985."

"This project will provide us with information on the impact of combining short-term commodity program objectives with long-term conservation objectives. It will give USDA and the Congress an opportunity to evaluate the landowners' willingness to make a long-term commitment to retire highly erodible land."

"A continuing conservation effort must be built into agriculture's future, both in the government and in the private sector. We all have a responsibility. Also, the subject must be addressed in the 1985 farm bill! We must seriously examine the extent to which commodity and credit programs contribute to poor conservation practices by encouraging production on highly erodible land."

Block said he will also begin a pilot conservation project in the Palouse region of Oregon, Washington and Idaho. The Palouse region is a fertile wheat-growing area with some of the most erosive topsoil in the nation. The project will make certain acreage of perennial grassland and legumes eligible as conservation acreage under 1984 farm programs. Normally, such land would not be eligible if it failed to meet

the requirement of being in grain production in two of the past three years.

"This requirement encouraged farmers to tear up the cover crop on erodible soil to prove a history of production," Block said. "The pilot project will allow them to leave grass or legumes on the land to prevent soil erosion."

Another initiative involves expanding to 45 states the targeting of Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and the Soil Conservation Service assistance in 1984 to the more critical erosion and water-short areas.

"This has produced excellent results during two years of trials," Block said. "Targeting of technical and financial assistance in 31 states in 1983 resulted in 29 million additional tons of soil saved and conservation of 276,000 more acre-feet of water."

Block said plans are also being developed for two national conferences in 1984. One will be a discussion with conservation and farm organizations on conservation strategy for the 1985 farm bill. The second will be on conservation tillage technology co-sponsored by several national groups.

Block asked USDA field employees today to participate in the special conservation effort. He said cooperation among USDA agencies on resource conservation must be a top priority for the coming year.

"This administration has organized the USDA agency leaders in every state and county into food and agriculture councils called FACs," Block said. "For the state and local FACs that are able to show distinguished achievements of major significance in this conservation campaign by next fall, I will reserve the highest honor that I as Secretary can bestow on our employees—the distinguished service award."

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USDA CONTINUES TO TARGET CONSERVATION PROGRAMS TO PROBLEM AREAS

WASHINGTON, Dec. 8—Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block today said the U.S. Department of Agriculture will provide \$45.3 million in "targeted" conservation program funds during fiscal 1984 as part of its national campaign to reduce critical U.S. soil erosion and water conservation problems.

Block said the targeting concept allows federal, state and local governments, and farmers to attack the most critical problems while maintaining conservation practices already established on other lands.

The agricultural conservation program, administered by USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service through the farmer-elected committee system, is a joint effort by government and other groups to restore and protect basic land and water resources. The program will target \$19 million for financial assistance in 43 states and Puerto Rico.

Block said USDA's Soil Conservation Service will target \$26.3 million to 44 states and Puerto Rico to attack the same problems by providing additional conservation technical assistance.

"With both ASCS and SCS working together on these problems, we will be focusing conservation resources and expertise where the need is greatest and we can get the most for our money," he said.

In allocating funds for the program, USDA will emphasize those measures that provide cost-effective solutions to resource problems and will encourage conservation tillage methods to reduce excessive erosion, Block said.

Block said both water conservation and erosion control measures will emphasize long term agreements covering installation of conservation practices over a period of several years.

Of the \$19 million in agricultural conservation program cost-share assistance, \$14.365 million is allocated for erosion control in 402 counties, \$3.635 million is for water conservation in 120 counties and \$1 million is being held in reserve at the national level.

Of the \$26.3 million for conservation technical assistance, \$22.15 million is allocated for erosion control in 639 counties, \$3.85 million is for water conservation in 169 counties and \$300,000 is being held in reserve at the national level.

The "targeted" funds are part of the USDA's continuing resolution for these two programs for fiscal 1984, Block said.

The following states are approved for the "targeted" conservation program funds.

Critical soil erosion targeted area funding

State	Cost-Share Funding	Technical Assistance Funding	State	Cost-Share Funding	Technical Assistance Funding
Alabama	\$ 405,000	\$ 900,000	Nebraska	920,000	1,500,000
Arkansas	0	500,000	New Jersey	50,000	100,000
California	20,000	400,000	New York	545,000	400,000
Delaware	20,000	60,000	North Carolina	185,000	400,000
Florida	0	300,000	North Dakota	190,000	200,000
Georgia	505,000	830,000	Ohio	345,000	800,000
Hawaii	75,000	250,000	Oklahoma	655,000	465,000
Idaho	175,000	675,000	Oregon	300,000	260,000
Illinois	285,000	1,160,000	Pennsylvania	520,000	400,000
Indiana	390,000	950,000	Puerto Rico	55,000	100,000
Iowa	1,305,000	1,600,000	South Carolina	245,000	325,000
Kansas	490,000	500,000	South Dakota	70,000	650,000
Kentucky	275,000	1,050,000	Tennessee	1,010,000	900,000
Louisiana	100,000	350,000	Texas	1,005,000	400,000
Maine	275,000	150,000	Utah	125,000	125,000
Maryland	190,000	300,000	Virginia	205,000	400,000
Michigan	325,000	450,000	Washington	720,000	850,000
Minnesota	525,000	600,000	West Virginia	40,000	200,000
Mississippi	510,000	900,000	Wisconsin	340,000	350,000
Missouri	970,000	1,400,000			
Subtotal				\$14,365,000	\$22,150,000

Critical water conservation targeted area funding

State	Cost-Share Funding	Technical Assistance Funding	State	Cost-Share Funding	Technical Assistance Funding
Arizona	\$ 340,000	\$ 100,000	New Mexico	55,000	100,000
Arkansas	0	150,000	Oklahoma	55,000	75,000
California	595,000	431,000	Oregon	150,000	100,000
Colorado	270,000	500,000	Texas	585,000	675,000
Florida	105,000	125,000	Utah	200,000	150,000
Idaho	340,000	134,000	Washington	0	100,000
Kansas	15,000	185,000	Wyoming	280,000	175,000
Montana	430,000	250,000			
Nebraska	15,000	450,000	Subtotal	\$3,635,000	\$3,850,000
Nevada	200,000	150,000			
			Total	\$18,000,000	\$26,000,000

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USDA CAUTIONS POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS IN MILK DIVERSION PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9—The recently enacted Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983 contains a critical, retroactive feature of great importance to potential milk diversion program participants, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

Everett Rank, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, said under the new law, producers who wish to participate in the diversion program may not—after Nov. 8, 1983—sell, lease or otherwise transfer cattle which could be used by the producer for the production of milk, except in limited circumstances.

Rank said transfers for slaughter are permitted, as are transfers to another producer who will enter into a contract under the milk diversion program. USDA also has authority to grant other exceptions, but no decisions have yet been made as to whether or how this authority will be used, Rank said.

"Until those decisions have been announced, producers will jeopardize their chances of participating in the milk diversion program if they transfer cattle that could be used for the production of milk, other than for slaughter, or to a person the producer knows will participate in the program," Rank said.

Under the program, producers may enter into contracts with the government to reduce their milk marketings. Those who meet all program requirements will be paid \$10 per hundred pounds for the amount by which they reduce their marketings from their applicable base period marketings.

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USDA TO TIGHTEN CONTROL OF MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

WASHINGTON, Dec. 9—Acting Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng today announced a plan to tighten government control over a small percentage of packing and processing plants that chronically fail to meet sanitation standards and other regulatory requirements.

Lyng said USDA's new initiatives are:

- Tightening eligibility requirements for plants that want to sell meat and poultry products to the federal government.
- Regulating more intensively plants with a poor history of compliance or which are marginal in their operating practices, with increased emphasis on swift and decisive action to deal with problems.
- Submitting a legislative package to Congress that would expand the secretary of agriculture's authority to shut down plants by withdrawing inspection.
- Finding ways to prosecute violators in a faster and more effective manner.

"While the overwhelming majority of those in the meat and poultry industry are responsible, there is a small percentage that consistently operate at the edge of acceptable bounds," Lyng said.

"They are the ones who undermine public confidence in the meat and poultry supply, tarnish the image of the industry and call into question the effectiveness of the inspection program."

USDA will continue to seek legislation to allow more discretionary authority to make shifts in inspection resources, Lyng said.

"But even without any changes in the law, existing resources will be focused more intensely on plants that fail to comply with sanitation and safety guidelines rather than minor infractions of facility requirements," Lyng said.

Lyng said USDA is tightening requirements for eligibility to bid on federal meat and poultry contracts to assure all bidders are able and willing to produce a satisfactory product. Plants with marginal inspection ratings will not be eligible to bid. Also, USDA will scrutinize purchased product closer and graders will have increased authority to take action when plant sanitation or product wholesomeness is questioned.

Lyng said USDA is preparing legislation that would:

- Authorize inspection withdrawal based on a pattern of repetitive infractions and substandard practices. Such withdrawal would not depend solely on action taken as the result of a criminal investigation or prosecution. Instead, it could be based on repeated sanitation violations; product contamination or economic adulteration; or harassing, impeding or resisting inspection officials.

- Authorize summary withdrawal of inspection when a plant has been found guilty of a major infraction of the law, prior to an administrative hearing. At present, the hearing requirement often delays withdrawal until months, and sometimes years, after conviction.

USDA announced Nov. 25 that the National Research Council will undertake an 18-month study of the effectiveness of existing and proposed inspection procedures. The National Research Council is the operating arm of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Engineering.

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